



CELEBRATING  
*Advent*

## Isaiah 9:6-7

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and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with  
righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.



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## King Ahaz (Isaiah 7-9)

- Ahaz “did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord” (2 Chron. 28:1).
- He adopted the apostate ways and faith of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, even erecting images of Baal and sacrificing his own sons in the fire.
- He is guilty of idolatry and doing whatever it takes to lead with power.
- He ultimately ends us up worshiping the God of Damascus.

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Peace is wholeness, health, security, well-being,  
prosperity, and salvation all united in harmony.



## **Paul, Ephesians 2:14, 18**

<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...<sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

## Saul to Paul, Acts 9:1-21

But Saul, still **breathing threats and murder against** the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup> And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” <sup>5</sup> And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

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<sup>6</sup> But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. <sup>8</sup> Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. <sup>10</sup> Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.” <sup>11</sup> And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight,

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and at the house of Judas look for **a man of Tarsus named Saul**, for behold, he is praying, <sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” <sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. <sup>16</sup> For I will show him



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he must suffer for the sake of my name.”<sup>17</sup> So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”<sup>18</sup> And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;<sup>19</sup> and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.<sup>20</sup> And **immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” ...**

# **TWO CURRENT CONFLICTS THAT NEED PEACE:**

- **Syrian Conflict/Refugees**
- **Police Brutality/Laquan McDonald: Chicago**



# TOPSHOP





# WHO IS FIGHTING WHOM IN SYRIA

## UNITED STATES

**Backs:** More moderate elements among the rebel forces.

**Opposes:** The government of President Bashar al-Assad and Islamic State.



## BRITAIN

**Backs:** More moderate elements among the rebel forces in Syria.

**Opposes:** The Assad government and the Islamic State



## FRANCE

**Backs:** More moderate elements among the rebel forces in Syria.

**Opposes:** The Assad government and the Islamic State



## RUSSIA

**Backs:** Assad government  
**Opposes:** The Islamic State



## TURKEY

**Backs:** US-led coalition

**Opposes:** Assad government



## SAUDI ARABIA

**Backs:** Several rebel groups

**Opposes:** Assad government



## QATAR

**Backs:** Several rebel groups

**Opposes:** Assad government.



## IRAN

**Backs:** Assad government  
**Opposes:** Sunni insurgents and the Islamic State



Haven't begun to talk about the militias, rebels, citizens who want Assad out

*In these conflicts do we desire...*

That both parties agree to disagree?

That both parties cease fire?

That both parties co-exist?

*No, we want peace, which is found in Jesus Christ only.*

*Do these situations give us reason to long for His return?*

# God Speaks through His Word

Deuteronomy 10:18: “He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing.”

James 1:27: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.

Romans 12:20: “On the contrary: If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”



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We desire that these national and international issues will empower us to have a local impact and deal with matters of our hearts.

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